

<b>Series:</b> Desire Overflow	<b>Reference:</b> Romans 15:13	<b>Title:</b> Harvest Time	<b>Date:</b> 07.25.2021
<b>Website Writeup:</b> What's filling for? We explore that question today in the next sermon of the series.			

### COLOR CHANGES IN TEXT INDICATE SLIDE CHANGES

We're talking of being desiring overflow - Romans 15:13, *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

We've talked a glass full of dirty water. Turn a faucet on. Start to fill it up. Eventually clean running water pushes any impurities out of the glass. That's the idea of being filled to overflowing by our God of hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. That we're filled with the Living Word & in process are sanctified - changed & transformed by the Holy Spirit into the likeness of Christ - not that we all walk & talk the same losing individuality. Rather we take on the character & heart of God within our own personalities.

However, we're not changed merely for personal blessing, there's a broader purpose to our filling. We see this in the image of the 5 tiered fountain. The Holy Spirit filling us up, overflowing first to family & friends, then to local community & onto the world. Overflow, a natural process of being filled. Not forced or awkward, just happens. What you're filled with overflows to others. So we want to be filled with hope, peace & joy - we want to be filled with the Spirit, brimming with Jesus.

So, we're filled with what John has called Living Water found in 3 things - Jesus, the Word of God & the Holy Spirit. John 7:38-39...<sup>38</sup> *"Whoever believes in ME, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."* And John explained...<sup>39</sup> *"By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."*

Today we want to look at that event, when the Holy Spirit was given to the Church recorded in the first 2 chapters of Acts. In Acts 1, Luke begins by quoting Jesus after His resurrection & before His ascension when he says in Acts 1:8... *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

There's our fountain image laid out very clearly - Holy Spirit - You - Jerusalem (your own family) - Judea/Samaria (local community) - ends of the earth (the world). Notice, this idea of filling & overflow is at the very core of God's plan for us.

What does that mean? Let's set the scene first...Jesus has been crucified, rose from the dead, met with the disciples & has now ascended to heaven. Remember we've pointed out that Jesus said it was better that He leave in order that the Holy Spirit may come to them. He said in John 16:7...<sup>7</sup> *"But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will*

*send him to you.” We looked at that verse two weeks ago, but let’s continue from there to hear more about this Spirit in John 16:8-15...<sup>8</sup> When he (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> about sin, because people do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.”*

*<sup>12</sup> “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”*

Jesus made clear, His leaving allowed for the coming of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus Himself would send (16:7). He outlined the convicting work of the Spirit, which related directly to the work & person of Jesus. First, the Holy Spirit will convict the world in the area of sin that results from disbelief in Jesus (16:9). Second, the Holy Spirit will convict the world in the area of righteousness in light of the life of Jesus (16:10). Third, the Holy Spirit will convict the world in the area of judgment because Jesus defeated Satan who now stands condemned (16:11). Only through the Holy Spirit can an individual be brought to repentance from sin leading to faith - remember it’s not doing good things which make us right with God, but the work of Jesus on the cross. The Holy Spirit enables the follower of Christ to live out the Christ-life. The Spirit of Truth will guide the disciples into all truth (16:13). His purpose will be to reveal Christ (16:14). The mark of the work of the Holy Spirit, then, is whether Christ is made central & glorified.<sup>1</sup>

The Spirit’s work isn’t limited to this, but we can see just from that list, it’s important, and intimately tied to the person & work of Jesus. *And remember Jesus also said in John 14:12...<sup>12</sup> “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, BECAUSE I am going to the Father.”* Because Jesus goes to the Father, because we have the Spirit...

So the Disciples wait with these promises in hand. Maybe a little deflated, sheepish, confused & pensive. But what Jesus promised comes about & we see a great change in the disciples; they do DO great things. It says in Acts 2:1-13...

*When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.*

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<sup>1</sup> Dockery, D. S., Butler, T. C., Church, C. L., Scott, L. L., Ellis Smith, M. A., White, J. E., & Holman Bible Publishers (Nashville, TN. (1992). *Holman Bible Handbook* (625). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

*5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?*

*9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>d</sup> 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome <sup>11</sup> (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" <sup>12</sup> Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"*

*13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." (There's always a comedian!)*

What is Pentecost & why did the Spirit come then? Pentecost was the greek name for the Jewish celebration at the end of 7 weeks following Passover, this day is also called Shavuot, or the Festival of Weeks. It comes 50 days, or 7 weeks after Passover.

You may remember, Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples in the upper room 50 days before Pentecost. Passover was a celebration of Israel's liberation from Egypt when they adorned the doorposts of their homes with the blood of a lamb as the Angel of Death wandered the streets & took the firstborn son of every household. But the blood sacrifice on the doorposts of Jewish homes averted the wrath of God & was a foreshadowing of the blood of Jesus which averts the wrath of God on us.

And we remember Jesus was crucified soon after He celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples - and once a month we remember that at the Lord's Table. So everything surrounding Jesus death, resurrection, ascension & now the giving of the Holy Spirit is impregnated with imagery meant to speak clearly to the Jewish mind.

We find reference to this festival of Weeks in Leviticus, and Exodus at the time of the giving of the Law & also in Deuteronomy 16:9-12...*9 Count off seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. 10 Then celebrate the Festival of Weeks to the Lord your God by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings the Lord your God has given you. 11 And rejoice before the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name—you, your sons & daughters, your male & female servants, the Levites in your towns, and the foreigners, the fatherless & the widows living among you. 12 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and follow carefully these decrees.*

So, looking at Shavuot/the Festival of Weeks which came to be known as Pentecost (Pente referring to 50) we notice a few things. Because everything surrounding this time was impregnated with imagery meant to speak clearly to the Jewish mind.

1. The beginning of this 50 day cycle is marked by a cutting down of the barley & wheat; it's harvest time. At the end of that 50 days is a celebration of the life which that harvest brings. And we must remember that Jesus is reflected all throughout the Old Testament, His death is mirrored in the cutting down (or the death of) the wheat. And the harvest of the wheat 7 weeks later images the life His death brings.

2. This festival also commemorates the giving of the Law to Moses at Mt Sinai 50 days after Israel was delivered from slavery in Egypt. Remember, Israel was enslaved. The Passover occurs. Lambs were sacrificed. Blood was put on the doorposts of Israelite homes. And God's judgement was averted on those homes - the Angel of Death passed over them. Jesus death, resurrection & the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost are also a celebration of our liberation from bondage as slaves as a result of His blood shed for our sin. Jesus' giving of himself & our receiving of the Holy Spirit reflects the fact that Israel was given the Law at Mount Sinai 50 days after their deliverance from Egypt. The Law was given to Moses & Israel at Mt Sinai inscribed in stone. Now, due to the work of Jesus on the cross & in receiving the Holy Spirit, the Living Word is inscribed on the tablets of our hearts.

4. The festival of weeks was one of three festivals of ingathering where Israel came together to rejoice at the place which God dwelled, the Temple. And for us, we're called to rejoice in the knowledge that the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost. We've become the living Temple of the Holy Spirit - God, the Holy Spirit now resides in His people. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says...<sup>19</sup> *Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.*

5. On Passover, the people of Israel were freed from their enslavement to Egypt. On Shavuot, or the Festival of Weeks, they were given the Torah/the Law of God at Mt Sinai, and became a nation bound by covenant promise to God. In Christ there's a new everlasting covenant established based on the sacrifice of Gods own Son for us.

6. The seven weeks started with the harvesting of barley & wheat, and ended with an offering of bread - Jesus is also known as the Bread of Life.

7. The book of Ruth is read at the festival of weeks. In that story she was a convert/foreigner adopting into the family of God. Ruth signifies Gods heart for the foreigner to be included/adopted into the family of God. In Jesus this good news is proclaimed to the nations starting here in Acts 2.

Therefore, against the backdrop of all this rich imagery, we have Jews from all the nations gathered at the Temple of God. They had gathered from all over the known world.

These disciples have been filled with the Living Word, with Jesus & the Holy Spirit which effortlessly overflows to the people surrounding them. Our image of the fountain complete right here. All the nations gathered at the Temple, the diaspora had come together, and received the fruits of overflow. Everyone would leave there the following day & go back home, to their families, to their communities, to their host nations. Back

to their friends. Back to their communities, back to the world to overflow this message & power to others.

120 believers were gathered there that day. Acts 1:15 says...<sup>15</sup> *In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred & twenty.)* 120 believers, gathered before the nations of the earth, filled with the Holy Spirit overflowing to those around them. If you've ever wondered if God can change the world through you, read Acts 1 & 2! He did by filling 120 people with His Spirit that day before the nations!

Notice what follows. If we had time to read we would, but Peter, filled with the Spirit & knowledge of the Scriptures takes the opportunity to stand up & tie all that's happening back to the Word of God. He quotes the prophet Joel & David from their Hebrew Scriptures.

So it's not just about some supernatural power, but the Spirit always works in conjunction with the Living Word of God. Everything the Spirit does is tied to the Biblical narrative, if we want to have fellowship with & in the Spirit, then we must value & love the Word of God.

Peter reveals to the crowd that Prophecy of the Hebrew Scriptures is being fulfilled right before their eyes. Prophecy about Jesus, prophecy about them. So, this filling of the Holy Spirit on Peter, and other believers there, resulted in a natural overflow of Biblical Truth concerning the person & work of Jesus Christ - the Spirit enabled & empowered Peter to reveal the kingdom of God among them. This event happened together, as a church, as a body, not alone - no lone cowboys in the kingdom of God. It happened in a certain time for certain reasons, pregnant with imagery.

Jesus' story is adorned with the clothing of the Hebrew Texts. Everything about Him was laden with imagery from their lives, be it as mundane as bread, or profound as the sacrifice of the lamb at Passover. Wherever they looked, whatever they celebrated, if they drank a glass of water, ate a piece of bread, rubbed a kid's head, saw a Samaritan walking down the street, thought about Caesar Augustus, whatever it was - Jesus had usurped their cultural/religious imagery to glorify Himself.

Everything in this world speaks of Jesus, His death, resurrection & the life we may have in Him. Fall is a season of death, Christ comes at Christmas, Spring brings life. The 5 tiered fountain at Bryn Mawr Trust Company in Ardmore. Running water in the creek by your house. Caterpillars becoming butterflies. Whatever it is - it reflects Jesus. Even the painful sinful destruction of lives in war, human trafficking, slavery & poverty remind us of our personal & collective sin which drives us to need Jesus. Immersed in this imagery, the life & Word of Christ, empowered through the Holy Spirit, overflows in us to bring a message of peace, mercy & grace to a lost & dying world!

Filling & overflowing is at the heart of God's plan for your life. Churches struggle over their vision & mission statements, **while Jesus already gave it in the Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20...** *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

He's filled us with Himself, is filling us with His Word & has sealed us with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit who enables us to testify about Jesus.

Filling & Overflow are at the core of God's plan for us. Let us note, these people gathered at Pentecost in Acts 2, had a common language. Why did God make them to speak in other tongues? It was as if God was saying, this is a message I want you to take back to your communities, your people! This is a message I want you filled with & to overflow to the world.

We baptized Katherine & Megan last week. Six:Eight supports the Halls who serve in North Africa, two women working in the Middle East, and two organizations working there & are proud to do it. Kim & I spent almost 9 years in South Sumatra overflowing the Gospel to Lampungese Muslims. Sometimes even we, a small church in Ardmore, PA., actually overflow to the world!

What does this all mean to us? It means you get to participate in the Kingdom of God right here, right now. It doesn't mean you're blessed to just be blessed. It means you're blessed to be a blessing. It means God pours Himself out into you so that may overflow to others. It means you have opportunity through Six:Eight to overflow to each other, this local community & to the world through our Community Groups & the ministries we involve ourselves in like our Prison Ministry & other upcoming opportunities we hope to begin.

It means, to borrow a phrase from recovery programs, we have to Keep it Simple Stupid! Because in this day & age we can be distracted with sexy programs & flashy speakers on the internet who may preach great theology & doctrine, but they don't live in our local context. We're a local church, with a global mission which won't happen without being lived out in local context. If you don't do it here, you won't do it there. Global mission is always tied to your local body of faith.

So, as the local church who serves the local context of the Eastern Main Line, we need this year to do four things really well - Worship, Word & Witness. And we'll begin to naturally see that filling overflow to each other, our family & friends, the community round us & the world. Remember, not everyone who grows old grows up - so as we journey forward let's be filled. Let's overflow. Let's participate now.